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# Victorian Women



*VICTORIAN  
WOMEN*

JOAN PERKIN

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## Synopsis

While the aristocratic women of the Victorian age have long preoccupied the popular imagination, seldom have women of other classes been granted a voice. *Victorian Women* is the first book to allow women of all classes to render their own lives, in their own words, from birth to old age, in the long nineteenth century between the French Revolution and the First World War. In letters, memoirs, and other contemporary sources these women describe their childhood and education; courtship, marriage and homemaking; sex and motherhood; marital breakdown; widowhood; and their pastimes and entertainments. Their voices, heretofore drowned by the cacophony of louder, often male versions of history, speak to us with clarity and poignancy, revealing strength of feeling, courage, and humor. We find in this book the unmarried woman worker, the single mother, the prostitute, as well as those who fought for professional recognition against the regiments of the church, government, and law.

## Book Information

Paperback: 264 pages

Publisher: NYU Press (January 1, 1995)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0814766250

ISBN-13: 978-0814766255

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 6.2 x 0.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (4 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This is a reasoned and scholarly approach to women's history in a specific place and time without being too scholarly and narrow. Perkin covers the span of Victorian England in time, place, and class. The tone is measured, even while delivering facts sure to outrage - it was perfectly acceptable in the country fairs for a man to sell his wife and well within the law for a man to claim every cent his wife earned. Perkin's concluding chapter shows how far women came in one country, in one century, but is ever mindful of the suffering it took to achieve it.

Utterly fascinating. For someone who writes historical romance, the life and times of Victorian Women is a total eye opener. What I find unique about this book is that it contains actual written statements from women who lived during that time period. They talk of their feelings, ignorance, longings, lifestyle, relationships, etc. The information about sex, courtship, and marriage was shocking from one end of the spectrum to another. Astonishing. Well worth the read if you're curious about women of that era. I highly recommend it for any writer looking to write romance in that time period. I purchased a used version that was a former library copy. It's a bit worn, but that's fine because I'm highlighting large portions to use as reference.

I appreciated the breadth of the topic discussed, but I was hoping for more info I suppose. The author says in the intro that the book isn't for scholars, so I really can't complain. As I was reading through, I kept wishing there was a timeline to go with it since she discusses topics thematically rather than chronologically and I was hoping to connect the dots in a different way than presented. I definitely learned a lot from the book and I hope to learn even more from others that go more in depth into the topic.

This one was required reading for one of my courses. It was pretty entertaining. I would have purchased this one even if I didn't have to.

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